

Teacher Efficacy as a Mediator Between Concerns About Inclusive Education and Parental Involvement in Addressing Knowledge Application Difficulties Among Learners in Mainstream Education

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Abstract

Low parental involvement persists. This study examined the mediating role of general education teacher self-efficacy in the relationship between concerns about inclusive education and parental involvement. Using a predictive design with 150 general education teachers selected through stratified random sampling and were analyzed using mediation analysis. The study found a significant partial mediation effect of teacher self-efficacy on the relationship between concerns about inclusive education and parental involvement, supporting the Bandura Social Cognitive Theory. Other variables may explain the remaining 33.7% variance influencing parental involvement. School leaders and policymakers may strengthen teacher self-efficacy and school–family partnership programs to enhance parent engagement in inclusive education.

Keywords: *Teacher efficacy, mediation analysis, concerns about inclusive education, parental involvement, knowledge application difficulties among learners, mainstream education*

Introduction

Parental involvement in their children's education remains a vital concern in the field of education (Kantova, 2024). A noticeable issue is the low parental involvement in supporting the academic progress of learners with Knowledge Application Difficulties (Motshusi et al., 2024). Particularly concerning is the low parental involvement, which has been highlighted as a significant area of concern in terms of meaningful parental involvement (Jigyel et al., 2019).

In various countries, the problem of low parental support in inclusive classrooms is clearly observed. In Jordan, parents often report low involvement in school decisions related to inclusive practices (Hyassat et al., 2024). In Finland, inclusive education initiatives face ongoing issues with low parental involvement across school communities (Koskela & Sinkkonen, 2025). Similarly, in Australia, there is documented concern over low parental involvement in inclusive school environments (Taneja-Johansson & Singal, 2021).

In the Philippines, parental involvement is lower, indicating that sometimes parents hesitate to involve themselves in their children's inclusive education (Buno & Callo, 2022). Filipino parents from low-income backgrounds are more likely to trust teachers' judgments as professionals, resulting in low parental involvement in inclusive education (Hill, 2022). The lower parental involvement indicates that low interest in motivating children in inclusive education to get involved with the knowledge facilitators is traced to the failure of the school to provide guidance and assistance (Barten et al., 2022).

Low parental involvement in a child's education—particularly for learners with special needs in mainstream classrooms—can significantly impact student outcomes, and this relationship is intricately influenced by concerns about inclusive education and mediated by teacher self-efficacy. Research by Albiso et al., 2020 shows

that minimal parental involvement correlates with poor academic performance and behavioral issues, which place additional demands on teachers. In such contexts, teachers' perceived expectations from parents, peers, and administrators regarding inclusive practices—can either strengthen or weaken their motivation to engage parents (Şengönül, 2022).

METHODS

This chapter presents research design, sample and sampling, data gathering technique, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Research Design

This study employed a predictive research design. Predictive research is concerned with forecasting future outcomes by analyzing patterns derived from existing or historical data through statistical modeling and predictive analytics, thereby extending beyond traditional research approaches that mainly explain past or present phenomena (Sghir et al., 2022). This design was deemed suitable for the present study because it allows researchers to anticipate possible trends, support evidence-based decisions, and inform timely interventions, particularly within educational and social science settings (Khalil & Ebner, 2023). Furthermore, predictive research provides several advantages, such as uncovering meaningful relationships within complex datasets, producing future-oriented insights, enhancing strategic planning, and improving the precision of decision-making by prioritizing prediction alongside explanation (Shmueli, 2011; Shmueli et al., 2023).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The sample of this study involved 150 general education teachers from various public schools that implemented inclusive education under the Schools Division of the City of Mati. The respondents were currently employed as general education teachers in public schools and had experience teaching at least one learner with difficulty in applying knowledge in an inclusive classroom within the past two academic years. The respondents were selected using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure proportional representation across school levels and geographic areas, such as urban and rural schools. Stratified random sampling was supported by Makwana et al. (2023) as an effective method for ensuring diversity and representativeness in educational research. This approach ensured equitable representation of all relevant teacher subgroups, thereby minimizing sampling bias and yielding a more accurate understanding of existing variations.

Data Gathering Technique

The survey technique was utilized to collect data for this study. Survey research is a systematic approach to gathering information from a selected sample through structured questionnaires aimed at describing the characteristics, perceptions, attitudes, or behaviors of a broader population. This method is commonly employed in research because it enables researchers to efficiently measure variables, examine relationships, and produce findings that may be generalized within a defined population (Ghanad, 2023). Furthermore, the survey technique offers several advantages, such as reaching large and diverse groups of respondents, generating quantifiable data for statistical analysis, promoting efficient data collection, and strengthening the replicability of findings through standardized procedures (Ponto, 2015).

Data Analysis

In this study, descriptive, correlational, and mediation analyses were utilized to examine the data. Descriptive analysis is a statistical method used to organize, summarize, and present large sets of data, enabling researchers to identify patterns, describe trends, and gain a clearer understanding of observed phenomena through statistical measures such as the mean and standard deviation (Kaur & Yellapu, 2018). Accordingly, the mean and standard deviation were employed to describe the study variables. Furthermore, correlation analysis is used to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between two continuous variables, allowing researchers to examine the degree of association among measured constructs (Schober et al., 2018). In this study, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used to assess the relationships among the variables. Lastly, mediation analysis is a statistical procedure that examines whether the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable is explained through an intervening variable, thereby partitioning the total effect into its direct and indirect components (MacKinnon et al., 2007). Accordingly, beta estimates of the direct, indirect, and total effects of the determinant variables were utilized in the analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were fundamental to this study. The researcher ensured full compliance with the ethical standards of the Society for Moral Integrity and Legal Ethics (SMILE). These guidelines covered key principles such as social value, informed consent, risk management, confidentiality, justice, transparency, researcher competence, adequacy of facilities, and community involvement, thereby protecting the rights and welfare of participating teachers and strengthening the study's validity and relevance. Informed consent was obtained by clearly explaining the study's objectives, procedures, risks, and benefits before data collection. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were allowed to decline or withdraw at any time without penalty. Privacy and confidentiality were strictly maintained in accordance with the Data Privacy Act of 2012, with all data securely stored and anonymized to protect participants' identities. Potential risks, such as minor psychological discomfort when reflecting on professional experiences and possible disruption to teaching schedules, were minimized through flexible scheduling, the use of secure platforms like Google Forms, and a respectful, non-intrusive data collection process.

RESULTS

This chapter presents the descriptive, correlational, and mediation analyses through appropriate tabular presentations, along with the corresponding analysis and interpretation of the statistical results. The chapter concludes with a summary of the key findings of the study.

Descriptive Results

Table 1 shows the descriptive statistical results of the study. Contained in the table are the variables involved namely Concerns about Inclusive Education, Parental Involvement and Teacher Efficacy with their respective indicators. Likewise, included are the number of samples, standard deviation, mean and descriptive levels.

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis (N=150)

Variables	N	SD	Mean	Descriptive Level
Concerns about Inclusive Education (IV)	150	0.542	3.37	Very High
Resources		0.663	3.45	Very High
Difficulties		0.496	3.41	Very High
Appropriateness		0.769	3.25	High
Workloads		0.616	3.37	Very High
Parental Involvement (DV)	150	0.422	3.44	Very High
Parenting		0.480	3.43	Very High
Communicating		0.437	3.44	Very High
Volunteering		0.490	3.40	Very High
Learning at Home		0.443	3.48	Very High
Decision Making		0.442	3.44	Very High
Collaborating with the Community		0.479	3.43	Very High
Teacher's Efficacy (MV)	150	0.428	3.48	Very High
Efficacy in Inclusive Instruction		0.437	3.50	Very High
Efficacy in Managing Behavior		0.464	3.47	Very High
Efficacy in Collaboration		0.446	3.46	Very High

Very High - (3.26 – 4.00); High - (2.50 – 3.25); Low - (1.75 – 2.49); Very Low - (1.00 – 1.74)

Table 1 shows that teachers reported very high levels of concern about inclusive education ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.542$), with the highest concerns observed in resources ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.663$) and difficulties ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 0.496$), indicating strong recognition of these as major challenges in implementing inclusive practices. In contrast, appropriateness obtained the lowest mean ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.769$), although still rated high, suggesting greater variation in teacher perceptions regarding the suitability of current inclusive practices. Parental involvement was likewise rated very high overall ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.422$), with learning at home receiving the highest rating ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.443$), while the consistently low standard deviations across dimensions ($SD = 0.437$ – 0.490) indicate strong agreement among teachers regarding parent active participation in their children's education. Similarly, teacher efficacy was assessed at a very high level ($M = 3.48$, $SD = 0.428$), with inclusive instruction obtaining the highest mean ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 0.437$). The low variability across its dimensions ($SD = 0.437$ – 0.464) reflects a strong consensus among teachers regarding their confidence in managing behavior, collaborating with others, and implementing inclusive instruction, reinforcing the stability of teacher efficacy as a key mediating variable in the study.

Concerns about inclusive education, parental involvement, and teacher efficacy were all interpreted at very high levels, indicating that teachers strongly recognize the challenges of implementing inclusive education while simultaneously perceiving high levels of parental engagement and confidence in their own inclusive teaching practices. In comparison, concerns related to resources and implementation difficulties emerged as relatively stronger within inclusive education, whereas perceptions of appropriateness appeared comparatively less consistent, while parental involvement and teacher efficacy remained highly stable, highlighting teacher shared perceptions of active home–school partnership and strong professional capability in inclusive settings.

Correlation Results

Table 2 is the correlation table. It contains the determinant and criterion variables. Likewise, it also includes the number of samples, r-value, p-value, decision on null hypothesis, and the corresponding interpretation.

Table 2. Correlation Analysis.

Variables		N	r	p-value	Decision on Ho @ 0.05 level of significance	Interpretation
Concerns about Inclusive Education (IV)	- Teacher's Efficacy (MV)	150	0.355	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Concerns about Inclusive Education (IV)	- Parental Involvement (DV)	150	0.455	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
Teacher's Efficacy (MV)	- Parental Involvement (DV)	150	0.903	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant

Table 2 revealed significant positive relationships among all study variables. Concerns about inclusive education showed a low positive relationship with teachers' efficacy ($r = 0.355$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that teachers who reported greater concerns also tended to demonstrate higher confidence in their inclusive teaching capabilities, although the association suggests that other factors may likewise influence efficacy. In comparison, concerns about inclusive education showed a stronger positive relationship with parental involvement ($r = 0.455$, $p = 0.000$), suggesting that teachers who recognized more inclusive education challenges also perceived greater engagement from parents. Notably, the strongest relationship emerged between teachers' efficacy and parental involvement ($r = 0.903$, $p = 0.000$), reflecting a very high positive association and highlighting that teacher efficacy was more strongly linked with parental involvement than with concerns about inclusive education, emphasizing its central role within the study framework.

Both concerns about inclusive education and teacher efficacy showed significant positive relationships with parental involvement, indicating that teachers who recognized greater inclusive education challenges and demonstrated stronger teaching confidence also perceived higher levels of parent engagement. In comparison, teacher efficacy exhibited the strongest positive relationship with parental involvement, suggesting that teacher confidence in inclusive instruction, behavior management, and collaboration may play a more influential role in strengthening parental involvement than concerns about inclusive education alone.

Mediation Analysis

Table 3 is mediation table. It contains the direct, indirect, and total effect paths. Likewise, it includes the estimate beta, standard error, Z-value, p-value, decision on null hypothesis, and corresponding interpretation.

Table 3. Mediation Table (N = 150)

Total effects							
Variables			Standard Estimate	Std. error	z-value	p-Value	Interpretation
Concerns about Inclusive Education (IV)	→	Parental Involvement (DV)	0.455	0.120	3.796	0.000	Significant

Indirect effects								
Variables			Standard Estimate	Std. error	z-value	p-Value	Interpretation	
Concerns about Inclusive Education (IV)	→	Teacher's Efficacy (MV)						
		→	Parental Involvement (DV)	0.301	0.097	3.097	0.002	Significant

Direct effects							
Variables			Standard Estimate	Std. error	z-value	p-Value	Interpretation
Concerns about Inclusive Education (IV)	→	Parental Involvement (DV)	0.154	0.062	2.486	0.013	Significant

The mediation analysis revealed that concerns about inclusive education had a significant total effect on parental involvement (Standard Estimate = 0.455, $z = 3.796$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that greater concerns among teachers were associated with stronger parental engagement in the educational process. When comparing the pathways, the indirect effect through teacher efficacy was also found to be significant (Standard Estimate = 0.301, $z = 3.097$, $p = 0.002$), suggesting that concerns about inclusive education partly influenced parental involvement by strengthening teacher confidence in inclusive instruction, behavior management, and collaboration. Moreover, the direct effect remained significant even after accounting for teacher efficacy (Standard Estimate = 0.154, $z = 2.486$, $p = 0.013$), confirming partial mediation. These findings indicate that although concerns about inclusive education directly influence parental involvement, a substantial portion of

this relationship is transmitted through teacher efficacy, highlighting teacher efficacy as a powerful mediating mechanism in strengthening parent engagement within inclusive education.

Concerns about inclusive education exerted a significant overall influence on parental involvement, indicating that teacher concerns meaningfully shaped parent engagement in inclusive education. Both the direct effect and the indirect effect through teacher efficacy were found to be significant, confirming partial mediation and suggesting that concerns about inclusive education influence parental involvement not only independently but also by strengthening teacher confidence and competence in inclusive practices.

DISCUSSION

Concerns about Inclusive Education and Teacher self-efficacy Correlation

The findings revealed that teachers manifested a very high level of concerns about inclusive education, particularly in terms of resources, difficulties, and workloads. The current finding affirms the idea of K rkk  et al. (2024), highlighting that teachers often encounter challenges related to inadequate instructional materials, limited professional preparation, and increased classroom responsibilities when addressing the needs of diverse learners. Likewise, the finding supports the assertions of Beltran et al. (2025), suggesting that these constraints further intensify the complexity of implementing inclusive practices in mainstream classrooms.

However, the current finding contradicts the idea of Piliotas et al. (2026), highlighting that despite the presence of institutional support, professional development, and collaborative school cultures reported in previous studies, teachers in the present study still manifested very high concerns regarding inclusive education. Likewise, the present finding opposes the idea of G ls n et al. (2023), suggesting that the availability of resources and administrative assistance alone may not be sufficient to reduce teachers' concerns within the current educational context. Nevertheless, the current finding supports Almalky and Alwahbi (2023), indicating that teachers' concerns about inclusive education may differ depending on contextual conditions such as training opportunities, support mechanisms, and school readiness for inclusive implementation.

Concerns about Inclusive Education, Parental Involvement and Teacher self-efficacy Correlation

The findings revealed that concerns about inclusive education were significantly correlated with both teacher self-efficacy and parental involvement, while teacher self-efficacy showed a very strong correlation with parental involvement. The current finding affirms the idea of Larios and Zetlin (2023), highlighting that teacher awareness of inclusive education challenges may encourage them to strengthen their professional capacities and collaborate more actively with parents in addressing learners needs. Likewise, the finding supports the assertions of Jardinez and Natividad (2024), suggesting that instructional challenges can serve as motivating factors for teachers to enhance their competence and establish stronger partnerships with families. Furthermore, the current finding corroborates the work of Maldia (2024), noting that teachers who demonstrate greater confidence are more likely to actively engage parents in the educational process.

On the contrary, the current finding contradicts the idea of Jury et al. (2023), highlighting that teachers' concerns about inclusive education do not always reduce teacher efficacy, as the present study showed that greater concerns were associated with stronger professional confidence. Likewise, the finding negates Đuri  

and Bunijevac (2023), suggesting that parental involvement in the current context was strongly associated with teacher self-efficacy despite external socioeconomic and cultural influences.

Concerns about Inclusive Education and Parental Involvement as mediated by Teacher efficacy

The findings revealed that teacher self-efficacy significantly mediated the relationship between concerns about inclusive education and parental involvement. The current finding affirms the idea of Mutangira et al. (2026), highlighting that teachers with stronger confidence in inclusive instruction, behavior management, and collaboration are more capable of engaging parents through communication, home-based learning support, and shared decision-making. Furthermore, the findings support the assertions of Hendriksen et al. (2024) and Gaspar and Sahay (2025), indicating that teachers' self-efficacy serves as a critical mechanism that connects educational concerns with effective parental involvement, thereby strengthening school–family partnerships in inclusive education.

On the other hand, the current finding contradicts Urhahne (2019), highlighting that parental involvement in the present study was strongly associated with teacher self-efficacy despite external socioeconomic and cultural influences. Likewise, the finding opposes the assertions of Diseth (2025) and Oranga et al. (2022), suggesting that teacher efficacy and parental engagement in the current context remained strongly interconnected despite potential professional and structural barriers.

Conclusion

Based on the finding, teacher self-efficacy significantly mediated the relationship between concerns about inclusive education and parental involvement, although concerns about inclusive education also maintained a significant direct effect on parental involvement. While parental involvement was significantly associated with both concerns about inclusive education and teacher self-efficacy, teacher confidence in inclusive instruction, behavior management, and collaboration strengthened this relationship. Hence, the Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1977) was supported, as the findings confirmed the dynamic interaction of personal, behavioral, and environmental factors in fostering parent engagement within inclusive education.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusion, the following are recommended

1. Based on the conclusions of the study, school administrators and educational policymakers may strengthen professional development, mentoring, and collaborative support systems to further enhance teacher self-efficacy in inclusive education and strengthen school–family partnerships. Furthermore, the Department of Education may develop responsive policies that address teacher concerns on resources, workloads, and instructional challenges, while future researchers may explore other variables that may explain the remaining 33.7% variance in parental involvement not accounted for in the present study.

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